Isabella Cleghorn

Rez Sisters worksheet

1. Reflect on the importance of the character (spirit?) not seen by all the characters but seen by only one or a few of the characters and discuss that character’s importance to the dramatic action and the development of the plot.

The Nanabush has no lines, but is a very important character within this play because it highlights the difficulties for some of the important characters throughout the play. The Nanabush is present at first with Zhaboonigan which makes the audience think that only children can see the Nanabush. Zhaboonigan speaks of the time when she was raped when she was a child. But it appears again during Marie-Adele’s hallucination/death. The Nanabush comes during the traumatic scenes and recalls which suggests that the spirit is there to heal.

2. Compare the aspirations and socio-economic level of the characters in this play with those in Wedding Band, Queen's Garden, and Real Women.

All of these plays have a central plot that is revolved around women, women who are poor and are minorities. In Wedding Band, the women are mostly comfortable but there is an obvious issue with money and power during this time especially for the African American women in the play. In Queen’s Garden it is more about education and placement of the characters. In Real Women Have Curves, it is also about education but mostly about body image and sexuality. The Rez Sisters want more money from the bingo, but also want different roles on the reservation which are normally men’s roles. All of the plays want a better life for women for their time although they have different goals in mind.

3. Compare the role of women, and the depiction of men in this play with that in Real Women Have Curves

In both of the plays, men are seen as sexual/predatory beings, but none of the predominant characters are men. There are mentions of males, but never in a particularly good way. In Real Women Have Curves, there is the El Tormentor but he is never shown on stage nor does he have any lines. Same for Rez Sisters, “Big Joey” is only mentioned for the sex that he has. In both productions, but mostly Rez Sisters, the only time men come up with importance is if they have hurt one of the women. Although they are not important in the script of the play, they influence how the women act which can lead us into the minds of these characters.